

Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program

What is the Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program?

Through voluntary agreements the Partners program provides expert technical assistance and cost-share incentives directly to private landowners to restore fish and wildlife habitats.

What is the landowner's role?

A phone call or letter initiates the process. The landowner works one-on-one with a local Service biologist to develop a project plan addressing the goals and objectives of the landowner and the Service to benefit fish and wildlife species on his or her land.

To implement a project, a cooperative agreement with a minimum duration of 10 years is signed. The landowner is reimbursed after project completion, based on the cost-sharing formula in the agreement.

What are the benefits?

For the landowner: Fulfilling habitat conservation goals on the land by working one-on-one in partnership with the local Service biologist.

For the species: Restoring important habitats on private lands that may result in the recovery of imperiled species.

A One-on-One Relationship with Private Landowners

In 2002, Dr. Luis Ramos, a rancher and coffee grower in Puerto Rico, contacted the Fish and Wildlife Service's Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program searching for assistance in managing his ranch for the benefit of native and endemic fish and wildlife species. That was the start of a long-lasting partnership between this landowner and the Service. His 1,400-acre ranch, named Hacienda Pellejas, is located in the heart of the island of Puerto Rico. It is managed for cattle ranching and as a coffee producing hacienda.

Later that year, Ramos signed a voluntary agreement with the Service to restore the native shade canopy on 25 acres of his coffee plantation. This project is providing and enhancing habitat for many species including the endangered Puerto Rican boa, the Puerto Rican sharp-shinned hawk, the Puerto Rican parrot, and many other imperiled species.

Ramos signed a second Partners agreement in 2003 to restore the remaining acres of the coffee plantation. He is looking forward to restoring and protecting as many habitats as possible within his property for the benefit of imperiled species.



Puerto Rican Boa



Puerto Rican Parrot

"My immediate vision is to have a sustainable agricultural business that, at the same time, protects and enhances the living conditions of native and endemic species. My long-term objective is that the Hacienda Pellejas will provide habitat for the successful expansion of the endangered Puerto Rican parrot."

— Dr. Luis Ramos